

Bringing up babies

Group of moms has stuck together, offering friendship and support



Contributed photos

These little cuties — from left, Emily Yamron, Nicholas Bartels, Emily Olson, Brandon DelCristo, Emily Miller, Kyle Christensen, Brooke Remsen and Sebastien Matrullo — were all born in 1998. Their moms met at Greenwich Hospital's New Mom's Group, a support group for new mothers. Through the years, those moms have stayed in contact and still get together every chance they get. Recently, they got together and brought their babies (plus a few more), too — only now they are all grown up and heading to middle school. Below, from left, are Malavika Pande, William Christensen, original photo "babies" Emily Yamron, Nicholas Bartels, Emily Olson, Brandon DelCristo, Emily Miller, Kyle Christensen, Brooke Remsen and Sebastien Matrullo. Behind the group, giving the thumbs up sign is Tyler Yurman.



By Lisa Miller
Contributed story

"I love the New Mom's Group so much. Since we have all shared in the same earth-shattering experience we are all so close. They are so important to me. What would I do with out this wonderful group of women? Being a mom is so wonderful, but it is so hard. This group makes it so much more bearable. It's social, but it's also so much more than that. It's an immense source of support." — An entry from the diary of Lisa Miller, August 9, 1998.

On September 11, 2009, on a dark and rainy night, and in spite of terrible traffic on Route 95, 11 women reunited at Shenorock Shore Club in Rye to celebrate a milestone. Our first-born babies, the ones to whom we gave birth at Greenwich Hospital in the late winter/early spring of 1998, had all just entered middle school.

These moms (originally) were all brought together at Greenwich Hospital as overwhelmed new mothers, filled with many questions, some answers and lots of worry over what our lives were going to be like, now that we had taken on the new role of motherhood. We gathered together once a week for six weeks as part of the hospital's New Mom's Group under the guidance of GH Nurse Ann Kashatus. During those six weeks, from May 5 to June 9, 1998, we discovered that there is power and knowledge and comfort — great comfort — in being with other new moms. We were all in the same boat, and we clung to each other and appreciated each other immensely. We were embarking on brand new territory and none of us wanted to do it on our own.

OK, so we all had our husbands, but honestly, we needed more!!!

Those babies were all so demanding and we all seemed to need so much help! We were overwhelmed with questions from "Which car seat do I buy?" to "Will I ever sleep again?" to "When is it safe to be intimate with my husband after childbirth?" to "Do I really ever want to?" to "How do I change that darn Diaper Genie?"

We helped and guided each other and leaned on each other for moral support, and we laughed and cried and learned how to be moms together.

After the Greenwich Hospital class ended, 12 of the 16 of us decided that we had not had nearly enough of each other. So, we banded together and made a pact to keep up our weekly get-togethers. We branched out to local restaurants and to various Starbucks, toting our babies in their car seats and succeeding in clearing out whatever establishment we entered. Then we moved on to playing dates at each others' houses, and also to outings at such places as Stepping



The group of mothers who met through Greenwich Hospital's New Mom's Group back in 1998 includes, from left, Cynthia Matrullo, Lisa Miller, Shonu Pande, Jen Yamron, Hilary Remsen, Mary Elizabeth Olson, Fellsse Starker, Sarah Pitt (mom of Brandon), Eileen Bartels, Monique Christensen and Jeanette Yurman. Poking his head in is Sebastien Matrullo.

herself to start a newsletter for our beloved group, which chronicles our children's birthdays and sets an agenda of what events/get-togethers are coming up. Over the years, we have morphed into "once a month" get-togethers, with just us moms, and it's usually a dinner out on the town, or sometimes at one of our homes. Our "Mom's Night Out" can be in a number of different towns, since we live all over: Two in Stamford, one in Armonk, two in Rye, one in Cos Cob, two in Riverside, one in Greenwich, one in Larchmont and one in Shelton. We all make a big effort to make it to as many of the get-togethers as possible. We decided a few months ago that to mark our eldest children's move to middle school we would bring all of our "babies" together again.

So, we managed to pull together 11 of the original moms, with 12 of the original children (one of us had twins!) to celebrate the big occasion. During the festivities we managed to photograph the children sitting on a couch posed in exactly the same order as they had been in 11 years ago, as "Greenwich Hospital New Mom's Group" babies. They have each grown into amazing, kind, talented and well-mannered children.

I wish all first-time mothers could be this lucky — to have such a great moral support group in place from so early on. We will be forever grateful to Greenwich Hospital for bringing us together. We all have no doubt that we will still be a close-knit group when we wave them all off to college . . . and beyond!

Lisa Miller gave birth to her daughter Emily at Greenwich Hospital back in 1998. She currently lives in Rye, N.Y.

Stones and Stamford Nature Center and even Central Park Zoo. We strolled them around at Tod's Point and nursed our babies whenever — and wherever!

It seemed that as long as we had each other, we could tackle motherhood. We even attempted taking our babies to the movies with us . . . oh, what a joy that was!

We all knew we felt happy together and began our very special bond that we still have today. We knew we were very lucky to have each other. We were a source of tremendous support for one another. Through the good, the bad and the ugly, we seemed to be able to lean on each other — no matter what. So, as the years went on, we continued our weekly get-togethers and continued to celebrate milestones, such as the big party we threw for our babies when they all turned 1, not to mention their first few Halloween parties, as well as Christmas gatherings.

We felt official, too, because early

on one of our moms took it upon